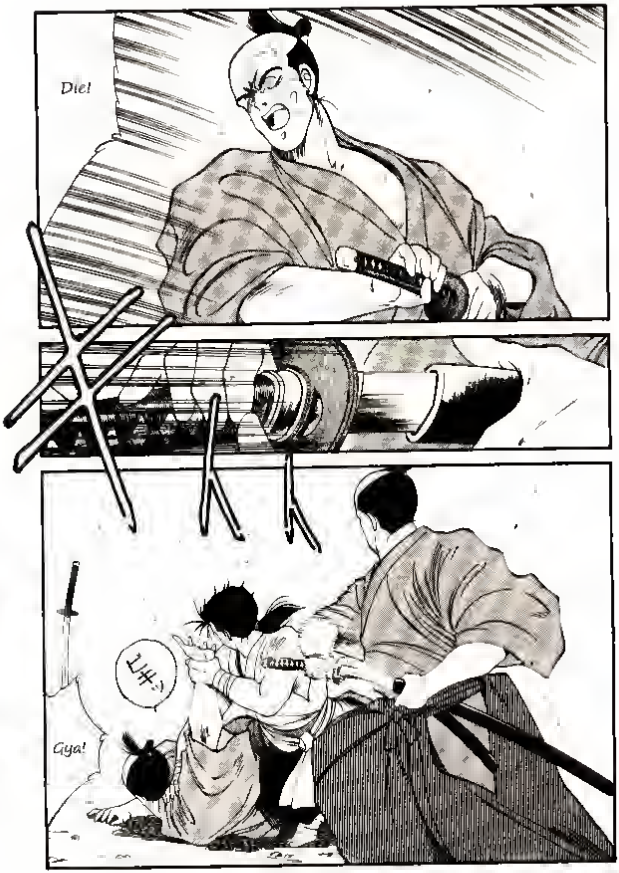
WINDING OF FLAME AND CLOUDS

One year later,

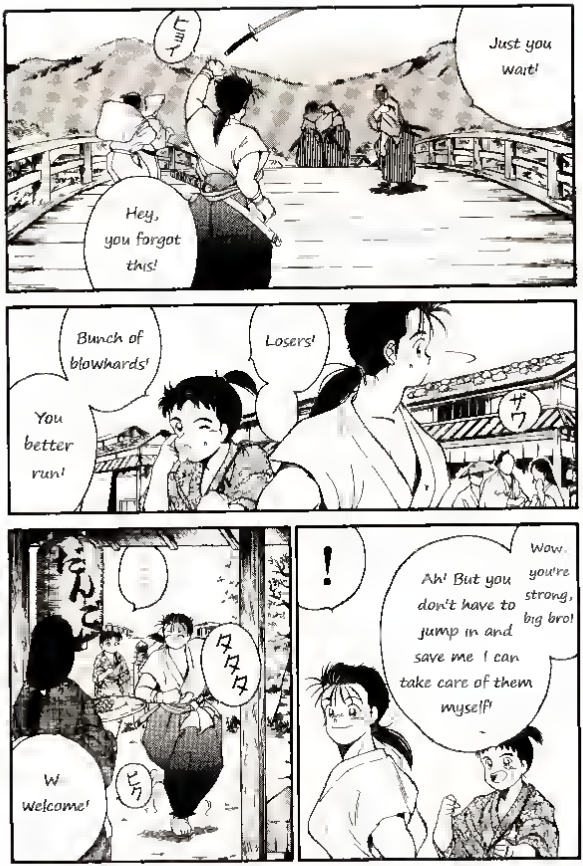
Aki Province.


Die!
Cya!

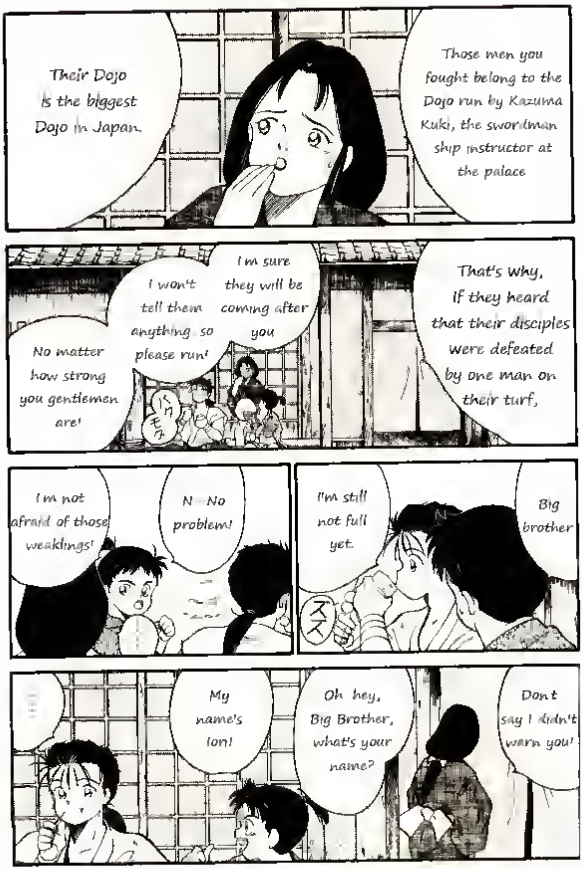
!?
Eaa!
チャリ
Cough

You want more?
ニヤ

Argh!
Urk!


ヒョイ
Hey, you forgot this!
Just you wait!
Losers!
Bunch of blowhards!
You better run!
ザワ
W welcome!
ペコ
タタタ
Ah! But you don't have to jump in and save me ! I can take care of them myself!
Wow, you're strong, big bro!
!

They're bragging that their teacher is the strongest in Japan
So I called them liars and they got mad
Because they wanted me to apologized
I drew my wooden sword
ハク ハク
モク モク
Are you listening?
Yup! This is yummy
ハク モク
Big brother are you perhaps really dumb?
You're strong though.
You're strange but since you saved me.
Three plates of dumpling please!
And Amazake!
Gentlemen, perhaps I'm speaking out of the line here, but I think it's best if you left town as soon as possible.
Huh?
ハク ハク


Their Dojo is the biggest Dojo in Japan.
Those men you fought belong to the Dojo run by Kazuma Kuki, the swordmanship instructor at the palace
That's why, if they heard that their disciples were defeated by one man on their turf,
I'm sure they will be coming after you
I won't tell them anything so please run!
No matter how strong you gentlemen are!
I'm not afraid of those weaklings!
No problem!
I'm still not full yet.
Big brother
My name's Ion!
Oh hey, Big Brother, what's your name?
Don't say I didn't warn you!

My real name is Shiori!
Yakumo
Iori huh?
What's the matter?
What's your name, huh?
T-Then,
That's a funny name
Yakumo Mutsu

I thought you might be a famous sword-man just because you're so powerful!
What the heck! Your name is just as funny as mine!
My master's name is
Don't have a heart attack when you hear who my master is
Hehe!
But turns out you're just a random guy!
Musashi
Miyamoto!

Nuu!
Wha-!

Eek!

What power!
No one but Musashi
Miyamoto himself
could've done it

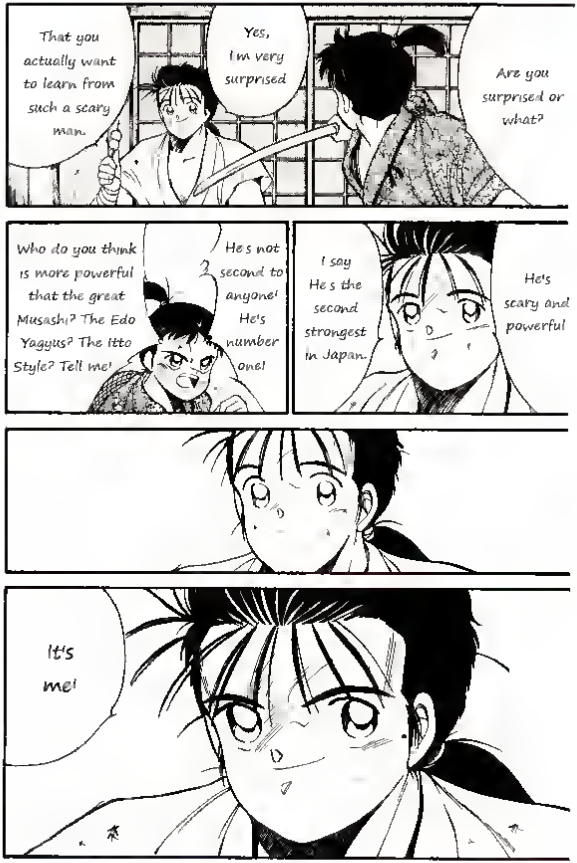
and switch to a short sword. No ordinary swordsman could've done that
To easily throw away your sword that is more sacred to a Samurai than his life
It's me, Takuan!
I heard you defeated Ono of Tourou and Kusagarima of Shishido Baiken
You're a truly sword master
Your sword know no fear
and cut everything in its path

I must say, you're almost too powerful! How about rein it in a bit?
Your sword is like something
that tries to cut down the heavens above
But even if you raise your sword to the heavens,
as you see, you can't cut down those clouds going by
Oh... what a nice weather!
Osho where did you meet him?

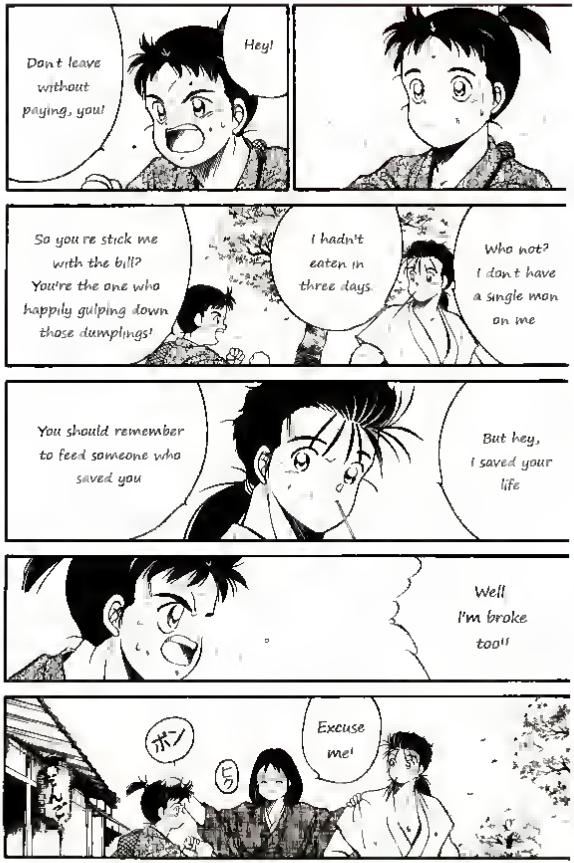
You've met him before?
So you do get it!
He's an interresting young fella. He's formless like a cloud, the same as his name
West of here... at Aki Province.
cut him down.
I don't think you can
Aki province, eh?
ふーん

*Aki Province: Currently Western Hiroshima

He told me to live in his acquaintance's house in Kokura because he's still training
だんご
Well, we're not together right now
But I want to be with Musashi
so I went on a journey as well
I want to become stronger and surprise him
I want to do a training just like him
Now I'm looking for him
I'm going to join him and he's going to teach me everything he knows about swordmanship
And once I'm strong enough not to get in Musashi's way,


That you actually want to learn from such a scary man.
Yes, I'm very surprised
Are you surprised or what?
Who do you think is more powerful that the great Musashi? The Edo Yagyus? The Itto Style? Tell me!
He's not second to anyone! He's number one!
I say He's the second strongest in Japan.
He's scary and powerful
It's me!

Sure, you're pretty strong, but if you faced Musashi you'd be history!
Oh come on!
No maybes about it! Definitely!
Maybe you're right.
If I ever run into him, sure.
Swear to me!
Then, if you ever run into him, you've got to fight him! No running away!
Thank you sirs, that will be fifteen mon!
Sure!
Okay, thanks for the meal


Don't leave without paying, you!
Hey!
So you're stick me with the bill? You're the one who happily gulping down those dumplings!
I hadn't eaten in three days.
Who not? I don't have a single mon on me
You should remember to feed someone who saved you
But hey, I saved your life
Well I'm broke too!!
ポン
Excuse me!

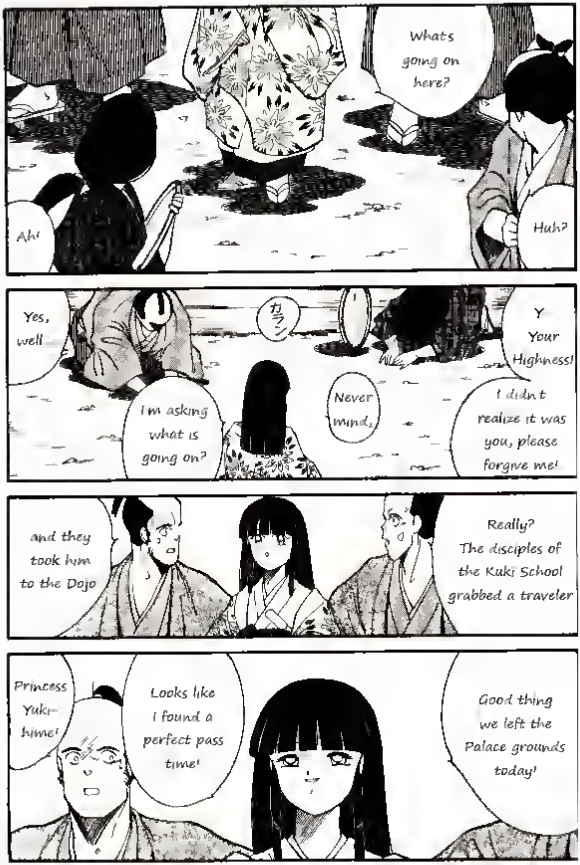
I have fifteen mon right here!
Huh?
ジャラ
You're always strapped for cash, aren't you?
I helped her out once and she paid for my lunch
Yeah!
Do you know her?

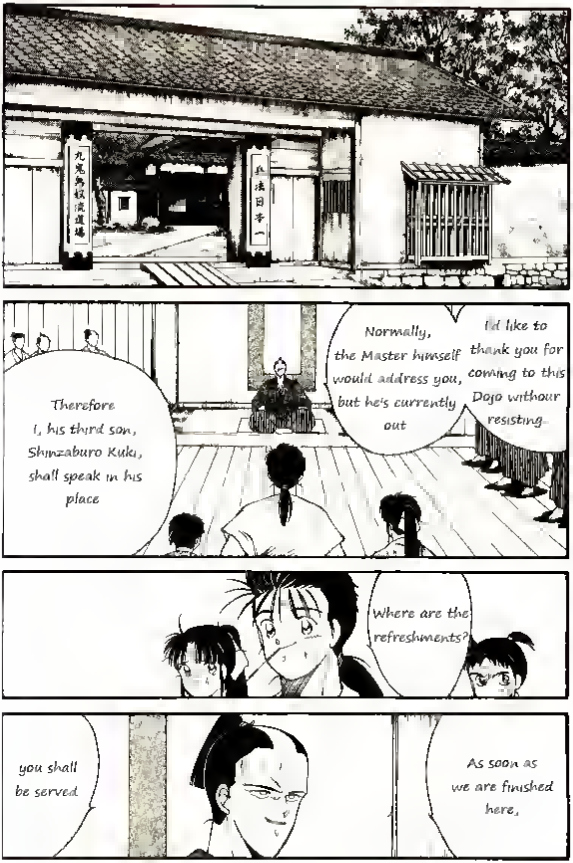
I was born a fool, it can't be cured...
You're such a fool!
I can't believe that old man even let you
Still,
Jii became ill and passed away
Jii
Maybe he has softened
Also ever since I decided to return being a woman, my Uncle are no longer after my life
He's been protecting me all by himself
His body is already weak to begin with

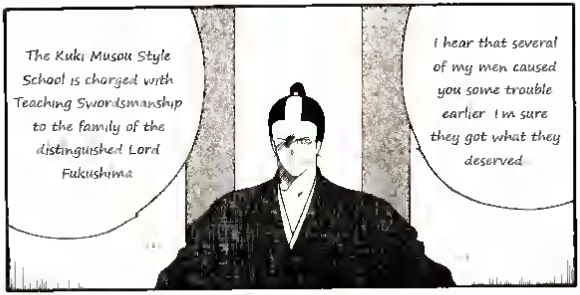
Your uncle is no longer after your life anymore
But that's no reason for you to leave
that old man
I see. So he's gone now
You're a girl? You sure don't look like one
Bride?
He wanted to use me as a political tool!
Before the mourning period was even over... my uncle tried to marry me off. He tried to send me to a strange land as the bride of a boy who's not even ten!
ポロ
ポロ

Uwaa!
とん
But I keep searching for you! It was so hard for me! I missed you so much!
I dressed as a man and dirtied my face they won't find me!
I've been searching for you these half a year
Ah ~
Hic!
Hic!
Hic!
What did you expect? You idiot, you should've just gotten married.
ジャリ

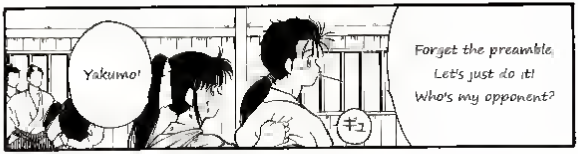
You seems to be occupied, but please accompany us to the dojo!
If you so wish
Only if you serve us refreshments
I told them they should get out of town
They'll get killed
Hf
Hf
But still,
he asked for refreshments! Even if he is somewhat skilled
he must be out of his mind

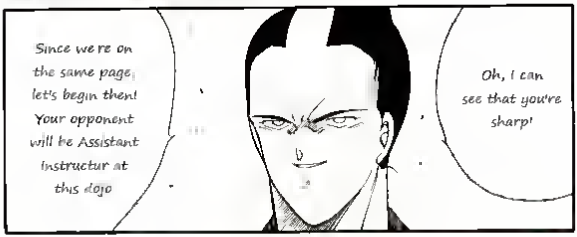

Whats going on here?
Ah!
Huh?
Yes, well...
カラ
Never mind.
I'm asking what is going on?
Y Your Highness!
I didn't realize it was you, please forgive me!
and they took him to the Dojo
Really? The disciples of the Kuki School grabbed a traveler
Princess Yuki-hime!
Looks like I found a perfect pass time!
Good thing we left the Palace grounds today!

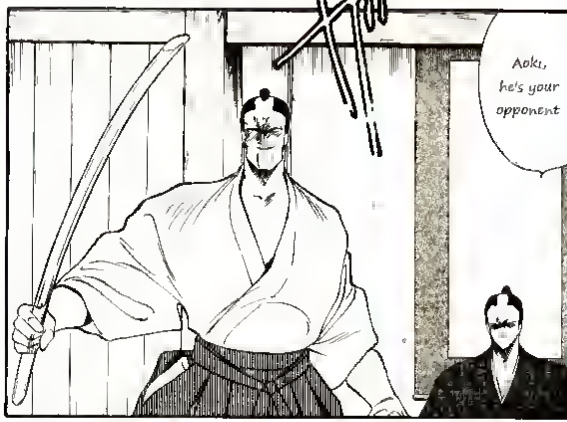

九鬼鳥投流道場
無法日手一
Therefore I, his third son, Shinzaburo Kuki, shall speak in his place
Normally, the Master himself would address you, but he's currently out
I'd like to thank you for coming to this Dojo without resisting
Where are the refreshments?
you shall be served
As soon as we are finished here,


The Kuki Musou Style School is charged with Teaching Swordsmanship to the family of the distinguished Lord Fukushima
I hear that several of my men caused you some trouble earlier I'm sure they got what they deserved

Though they are of low ranks we can't have any tall tales
And God forbid that students from out Dojo attack an unarmed man in broad daylight three-to-one, and still be defeated


Yakumo!
ギュ
Forget the preamble Let's just do it! Who's my opponent?


Since we're on the same page, let's begin then! Your opponent will be Assistant Instructur at this dojo
Oh, I can see that you're sharp!


Aoki, he's your opponent

Yakumo
Let's get this over with so we can eat!
Stand back!
Big Brother

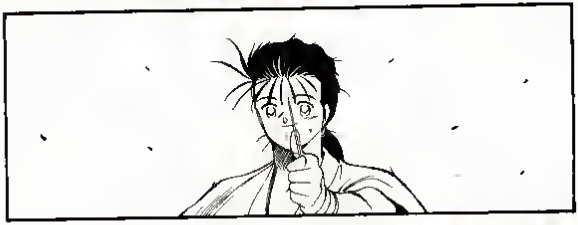
ガッ
Gulp
Ah! Princess Yuki!
Y Yes!
We're going in!
Aren't you supposed to be watching the gate? Return to your post!
>_;

I don't know where your expertise lies, but we have no intention of beating up an unarmed man
Pick your poison, whatever you want!
Anything I want?
You can even draw that sword of yours, too if you like
Then I'll use this
スッ
Yes

A dumpling skewer?
I'll be using this.
Yakumo
Big Brother?!
You insolent!
!
What!
If that's your chosen weapon, then I'll allow it
Shut up!

...
But you are not to make any excuses when you lose!
You are to wield the sword of the Kuki Musou Style at your full power
I have permission to kill you mean
ドン
ドン

ニヤリ

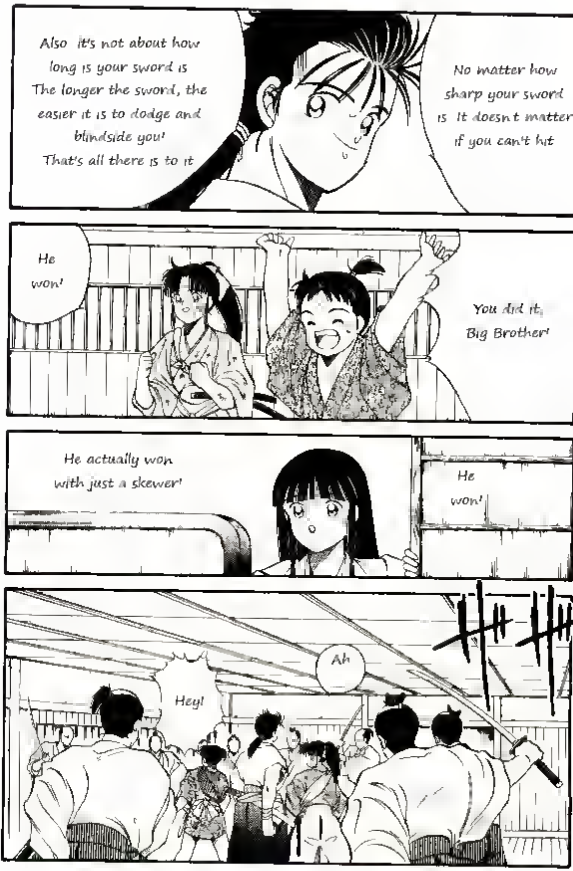


There's no way
he can win using
a dumpling skewer!
They'll kill him for sure
Is he a
fool?

Kyee!

ズッ
What?!
Ah!

フ…
Impo-
Assistant Instructor!
Wha!
カラ…


Also it's not about how long is your sword is
The longer the sword, the easier it is to dodge and blindside you!
That's all there is to it
No matter how sharp your sword is It doesn't matter if you can't hit
He won!
You did it, Big Brother!
He actually won with just a skewer!
He won!
Ah
Hey!

That's low! He fought fair and square and won!
And who said anything about fighting one on one?
No one ever said there was only going to be one match
Stop it right now!
Ah—
Princess Yuki!
And you call yourselves instructors of the Kuki School?
This is disgraceful!
!?
Eh?
Why is Princess Yuki here?

I will not allow you to seek revenge by ganging up on this man!
I hope I've made myself clear, Shinzaburo
The Assistant Instructor was defeated in an official duel

But,
as a Samurai... it will tamper with our honor
Y... Young Sensei!
Yes! If you say so, Princess Yuki then this matter is closed...

Make sure you remember that!
I won't let you leave this land!
Not one man bearing the Kuki name has been defeated by this man yet

What?
I appreciate your offer, but I can't accept
Please you should go now
Big brother!

those refreshments they promised
I haven't been served
Ahaha- hahaha!
Come to my place! I'll serve you as many refreshments as you want!
I like this man!
Aha! Kukuku!
Princess!

パク
モグ
アグ
アグ

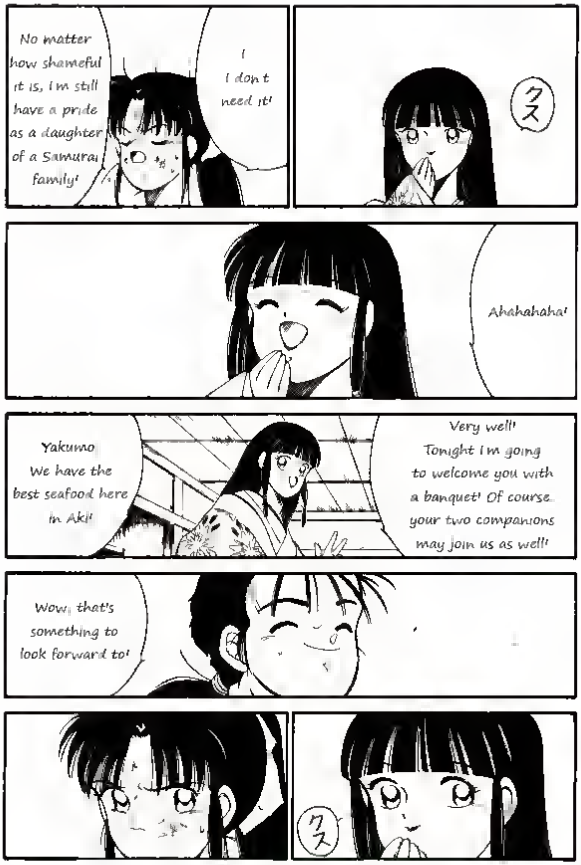
I wonder where it all goes? I mean, he just had all those dumplings too!
ﾁﾗ
Yes, these are great!
ｽｽ
My, what an appetite you have
Princess

Hmm
Anyway, who are you people? Yakumo's companions?!
I—I'm
My name's Iori. I'm Musashi Miyamoto's disciple!
チラ
ハグ ハグ
Hmm?
What am I to Yakumo?
I m
Wait a minute, you mean, you're a girl?
No, I_t
Hey, if you wanted some, you should've just asked! Don't be shy just because you're a girl! Both girls and boys can get hungry too you know?

I had no idea!
You're so scruffy looking,
Yes!
I'm the daughter of Fukushima family the richest family on Aki, so I don't understand your suffering, but you'd better take care of your appearance or you'll never find a husband!
Are you perhaps from the countryside?
ハハハ
And I've finally found Yakumo in this land.
T..This is a disguise! I'm dressed like this because I've been traveling alone.
Bodyguard?
I was hired as her bodyguard see!
ハハハ

Is that all? Since you said you've been reunited with Yakumo at last, I thought you were his fiancee or something.
I see
So I really am just his employer
You said you were hired, so it must've cost a lot
How much did this job pay?
Fifteen mon!
Ah!
That's a cushy offer. How many dumplings can I eat with that?
Then it's settled!
Ten Ryo or Fifteen? Alright, then! I shall pay you 100 Ryo! I'm hiring you to become my bodyguard!
Fifteen mon? How many Ryo is that?

You must've been embarassed wearing such clothings. How much should I give you?
Or perhaps you prefer this kimono instead?
Don't be shy, now. There's twenty Ryo there. Use it to hire yourself another bodyguard
What a pretty kimono
What?


No matter how shameful it is, I'm still have a pride as a daughter of a Samurai family!
I
I don't need it!
クス
Ahahahaha!
Yakumo
We have the best seafood here in Aki!
Very well!
Tonight I'm going to welcome you with a banquet! Of course your two companions may join us as well!
Wow, that's something to look forward to!
クス

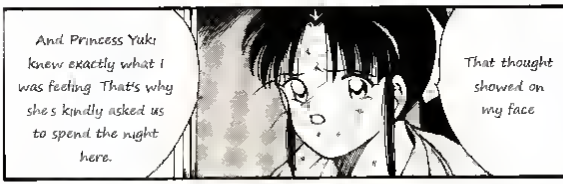
It's really huge! This may be a guesthouse but you can tell it's a Daimyo's bath
Big Sister Shori.. why don't you take a bath too?
チャポ
Sure!
ドク
If you don't watch out she's going to steal Big Brother from you!
What's the matter? You don't seem very happy
She's head over heels in love with Big Brother Yakumo
That princess

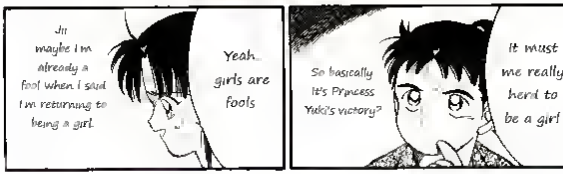
But
You've got to be more aggressive, Big Sister!
If I do that would just make me a sore loser
So what if she's the daughter of a Daimyo? Aren't you also one as well? Why don't you say anything when she called you a bumpkin?
Oh, don't give me that!
If told her that, she'd just laugh at me.
Also, I wasn't raised as a Princess. Moreover I left that land without any purpose
I might be a Daimyo's daughter, but it was a small land
But why?
And I'm so ashamed of myself

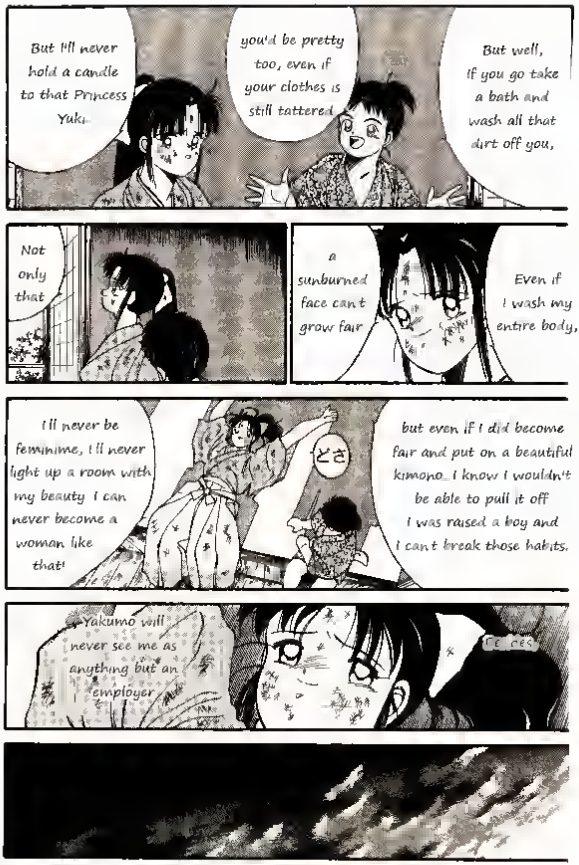
When she said she'd give me that beautiful kimono I wavered for just a second

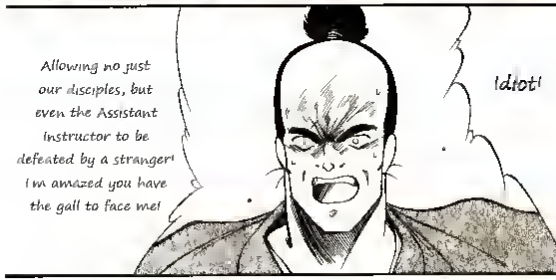
I keep saying that this is a disguise...
But I wanted Yukumo to see me all dressed up in a beautiful kimono like a girl I'm supposed to be
ヒソヒソ

Up until now I'd never mind wearing filthy clothes like this
But after seeing Princess Yuki wearing that shiny Kimono, I couldn't stop thinking about it


And Princess Yuki knew exactly what I was feeling. That's why she's kindly asked us to spend the night here.
That thought showed on my face


Jii maybe I'm already a fool when I said I'm returning to being a girl.
Yeah... girls are fools
So basically it's Princess Yuki's victory?
It must me really hard to be a girl


But I'll never hold a candle to that Princess Yuki.
you'd be pretty too, even if your clothes is still tattered.
But well, if you go take a bath and wash all that dirt off you,
Not only that,
a sunburned face can't grow fair
Even if I wash my entire body,
I'll never be feminime, I'll never light up a room with my beauty. I can never become a woman like that!
どさ
but even if I did become fair and put on a beautiful kimono... I know I wouldn't be able to pull it off. I was raised a boy and I can't break those habits.
Yakumo will never see me as anything but an employer.
ぐすぐす


Allowing no just our disciples, but even the Assistant Instructor to be defeated by a stranger! I'm amazed you have the gall to face me!
Idiot!

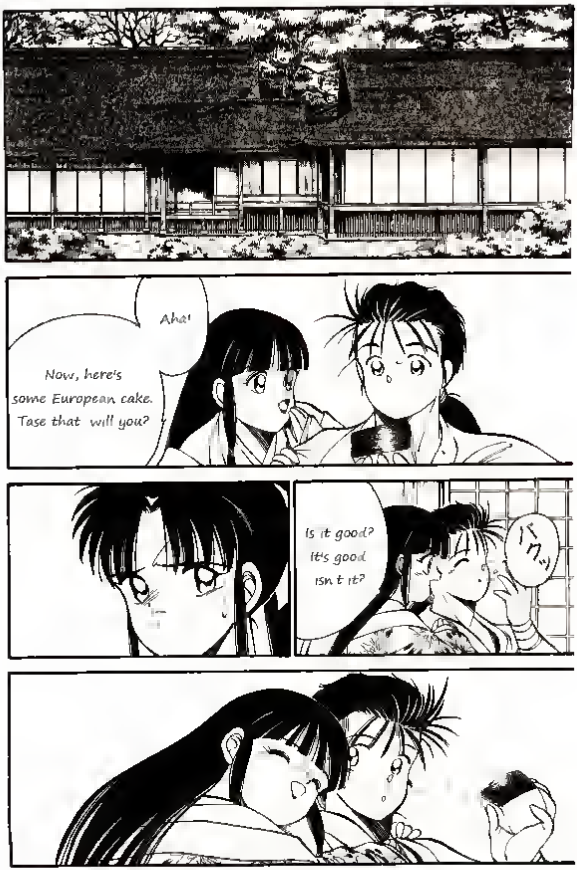
Princess Yuki witnessed the whole debacle! That means it won't be long before her father hears of this
ギリ
And to make matters worse,
Shimzaburo how come you be so calm?

working yourself into a rage isn't going to restore our reputation
Now, now, Elder Brother,
Y-Yeah!
That goes without saying
We need to focus on finding a way to lure this man into a confrontation and defeat him
That's right Princess Yuki likes that man
And he's staying in the palace.
But...
I'll ask my men to keep an eye on the palace
Well, you can leave the matter of drawing him out to me
Is she going to make him an officer? Or maybe replacing me as an instructor?
Ugh!

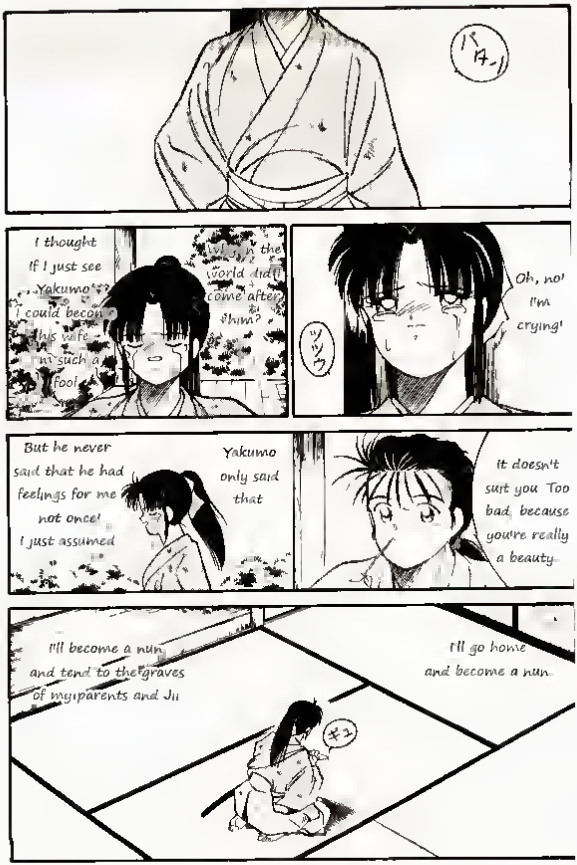
Right!
I'm counting on you!
Leave everything to me and just focus on your mental preparation now Elder Brother
Is that one part of your plan? You sure have guts!
If you may, I want Brother Genjiro to come as well
Is that you, Brother Genjiro?
I didn't know you'd come home
So, are you planning to gather some troops and fight with muskets instead?
Elder Brother, the art of war is not just about comparing one's skills as an individual
that is the art of war
That's right how to ultimately defeat your enemy, formulating such plan

And when it does come to pass, I'm certain that even you won't emerge victorious.
Nothing would please me more if that should come to pass.
Hmph. never mind! Eventually, your so-called plan will be shattered, and then I'll come in to save you.
ピク

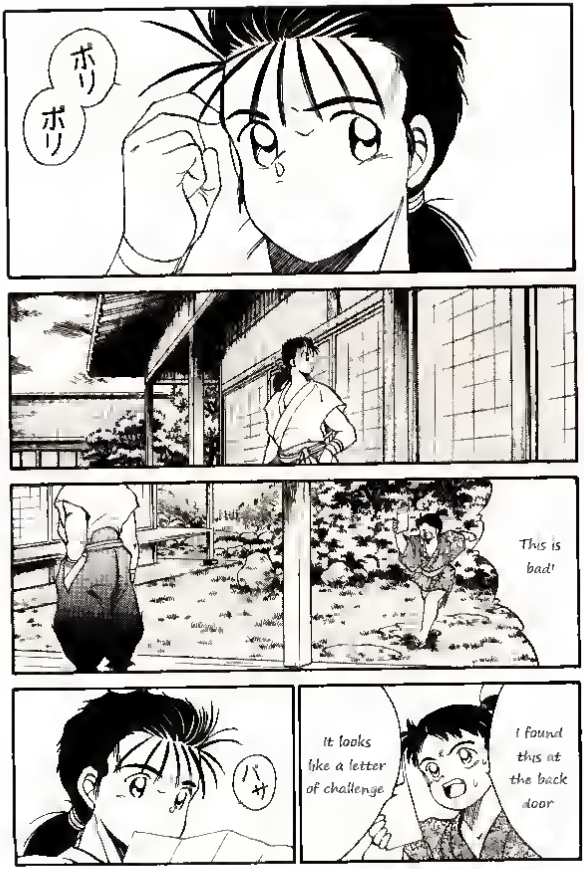
ガシッ
キン
You really need to watch your back, you know
You can plan all you want but if your plan is full of holes
Hmph!
Such a shame... If only it wasn't for his personality he could've inherited the Dojo
Really, His swordmanship, if nothing else, is still formidable. Is he the most powerful in Japan?


Aha!
Now, here's some European cake. Tase that will you?
Is it good? It's good isn t it?
ハハッ!

Are you okay with this, Big Sister? It's already been seven days
Wow, that Princess Yuki's all over Big Brother Yakumo, isn't she? They're that close now?
But you're different, Yakumo!
パクモク
Really, you're such a mysterious man, Yakumo. I could stare at you all seven days and never get bored. Really, most men are shallow and obsequious, and I can't stand them!
You won't budge
No matter how many times I flirt with you,
You seem to float just like your name. I have no idea what you're thinking!
ピク
What about you, Yakumo? Do you love me?
That's what I love about you the most!
ガラ
Where are you going?
Huh?
I see. So you do love me? That must be it!


I'll go home and become a nun.
I'll become a nun and tend to the graves of my parents and Jii
Yakumo only said that
But he never said that he had feelings for me not once! I just assumed
It doesn't suit you Too bad, because you're really a beauty.
Oh, no! I'm crying!
I thought If I just see Yakumo's I could become his wife in such a fool!
Is there in the world didn't come after him?

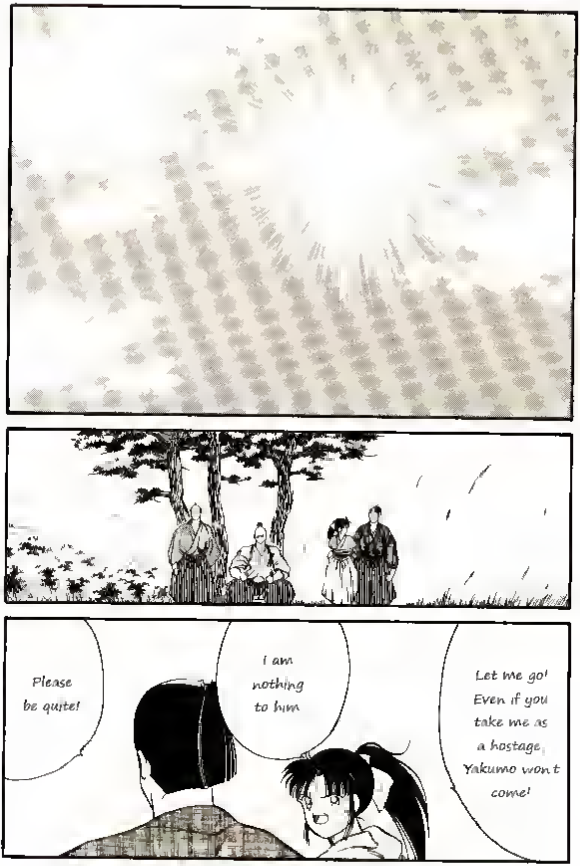
Who is he?
Hmm
No, that's not him He's
Farewell,
Yakumo!
Yakumo you came after me?


ポリ
ポリ
This is bad!
I found this at the back door
It looks like a letter of challenge
ハサ

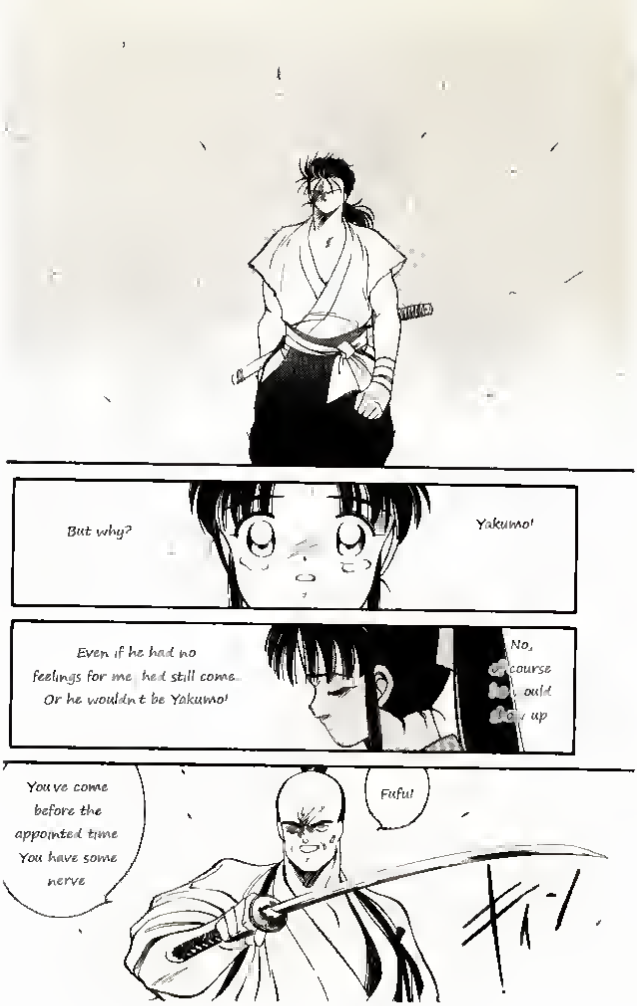
Did you deliver the letter of challenge?
Yes!
I put it at the back door and the other brat took it in.

But for his other companion to be a girl, huh?
With this victory is in our hands!

Tomorrow at dawn,
come to Sanbonmatsu in Rendaigahara!
We'll have a fair duel!
Kuki Musou School Instructor,
Kazuma Kuki
P.S.
We're holding your companion as a hostage.
Think about it carefully!
Tomorrow at dawn they challenge me to a fair duel
They're holding Shiori hostage.
What does it say?
Big Sister Shiori has been kidnapped?
B- Big Brother!


Please be quite!
I am nothing to him
Let me go! Even if you take me as a hostage, Yakumo won't come!

I can tell just by the way you're acting
He'll come
Yakumo's not..
He's not going to come here
Yakumo is coming
Right!
Brother!
!
H-
He's here!
Hmph


But why?
Yakumo!
Even if he had no feelings for me, he'd still come. Or he wouldn't be Yakumo!
No, course uld ay up
You've come before the appointed time. You have some nerve
Fufu!

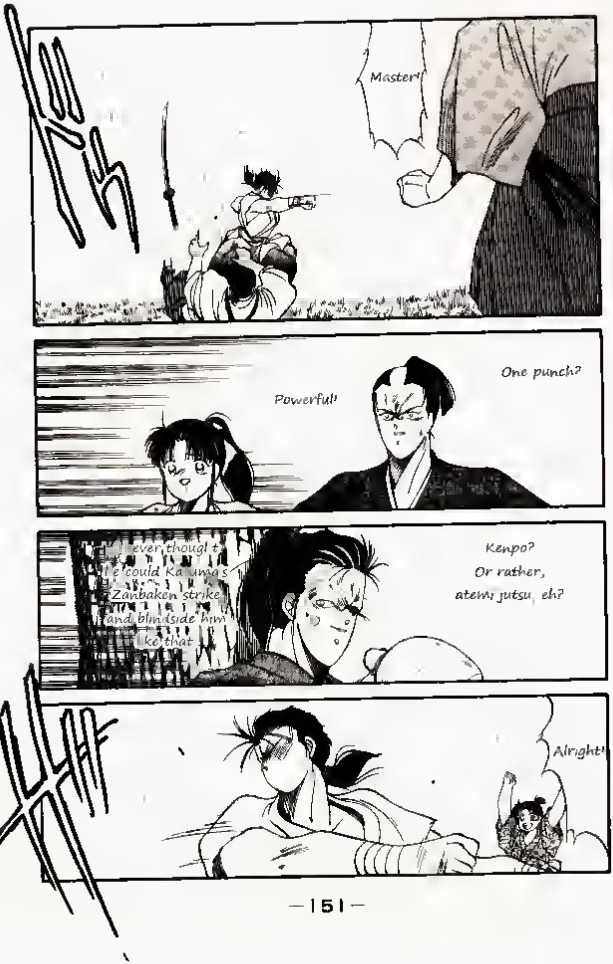
No, you're the ones with a lot of nerve
Yeah, for a bunch of cowards!
Yakumo!
Just remember that
It's called the art of war
N-
No
They didn't hurt you, did they?
That's good
Nevertheless, it's unfortunate for you guys

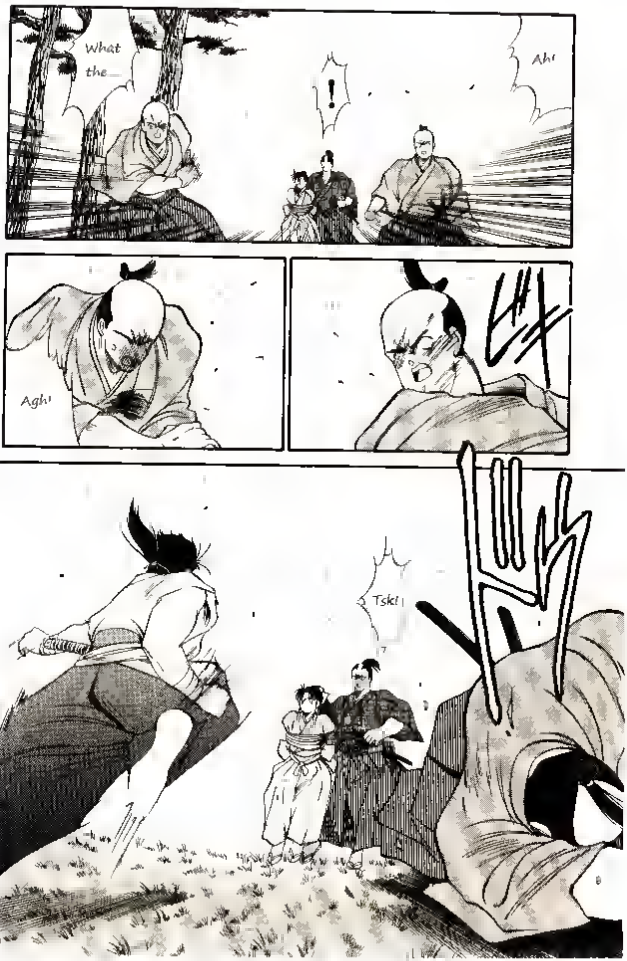
You should've just sent me a normal letter of challenge.
What?
Because now I'll have to
bring on the demise of the Kuki clan!

He's a tough one, that kid
Oh
This will be interesting
Prepare yourself!

Kuki Musou
Style, Zanbaken!
Hya!

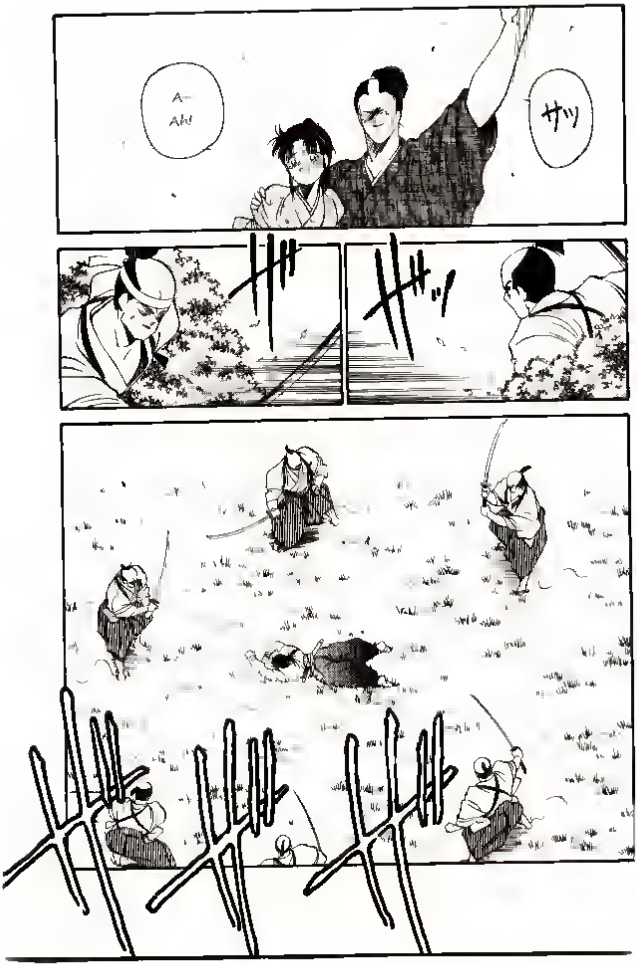
He dodged that?
Ah!


Master!
One punch?
Powerful!
Never thought I'd see
I'd see could Kaiunga's
Zanbaken strike
and Blindside him
ke that
Kenpo?
Or rather,
atemi jutsu, eh?
Alright!


What the...
!
Ah!
Agh!
Tsk!

F-
Fire!
What?!
ドン!

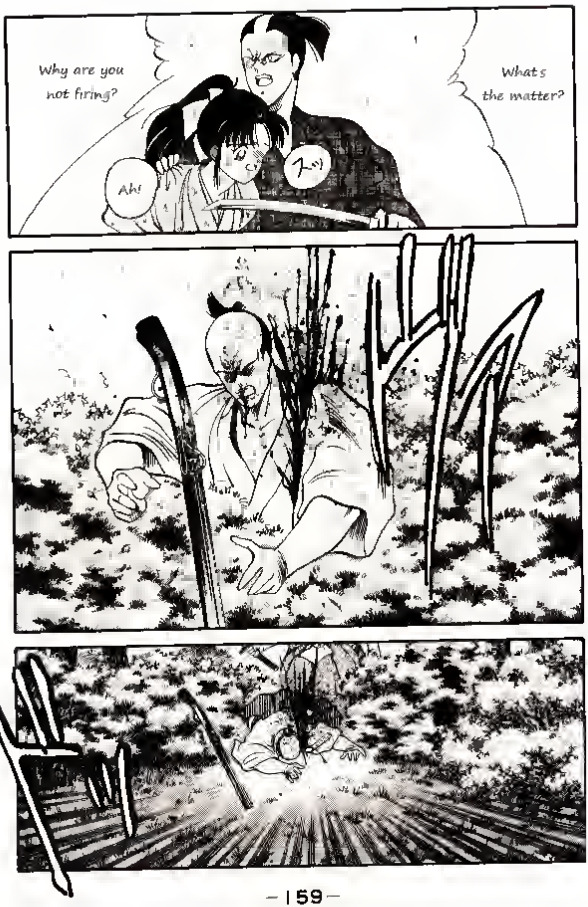
Art of war eh?


A—
Ah!
サッ

Also, you have people waiting for an ambush?
You call that fair? Using musket on him?
Huh?
He's moving! He's still alive!
It's just a scratch.
Don't worry!
Y-Yakumo!
Damn! So much for honnor, you guys crossed the line!

Don't move!
Ah...
If you move, things will get ugly for this girl
チャリ
Is that more of your famous art of war?
You can say that
Fufu! Still I must say you're quite powerful! You came very close to foiling my plan
Musketers! Fire second wave to kill!
!

I hope you don't mind being our target practice. Hold still now! If you move then...
I am, after all a perfectionist, you see
If it weren't for me...
If only I hadn't let them take me hostage!
Uh
I'll be joining you soon


Why are you not firing?
What's the matter?
Ah!

What?
Who the hell are you?!
Miyamoto!
Musashi

That man over there
he's my prey!
Aw, man! I just had to go and run into you!

SHURA NO TOKI

VOLUME 1 CHAPTER 2A
(RUSHED FUNI SUB EDITION)

TRANSLATION BY NANATEN (COURTESY OF FUNIMATION)

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